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UNPROFESSIONAL DISPLAY OF UNIFORM

BY CLARA SANFORD LOCKWOOD

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ONE of the distinguishing marks of true worth is modesty and humility. This statement applies no less to the nurse than to the physician, the lawyer, the scholar, or any other person.

It is characteristic of the shallow and vain to seek display and publicity, and in this connection I wish to speak of nurses who appear on public streets in full uniform.

Nurses, of all others, should command respect and confidence, and they can only do this by appearing at all times modest and dignified. The nursing profession is of such a nature that to command respect it must maintain the highest standards of character and refinement. The public overlooks in others what it condemns in a nurse, and for this reason the nurse must jealously guard her conduct, her dress, and her speech.

The uniform of a nurse is an honorable distinction when worn with dignity and at suitable times,—how refreshing are the simple cap and gown in the sick-room!—but when used for display and to attract attention on public streets it loses its high significance and becomes the target for disrespectful remarks.

My attention has frequently been called to the number of nurses who appear on the principal business streets of one of our large Western cities in full uniform, or in combinations of uniform and opera clothes.

Imagine two nurses in full uniform (cap, apron, and gown), arms affectionately around each other, standing gazing into the shop windows of a crowded street! Or, again, a nurse with striped gingham gown and large black Gainsborough hat, elaborately trimmed with ostrich plumes, riding in one of the down-town cars! And, once more, picture a uniformed nurse, cap and all, pushing her way across a busy street, dodging between men, bicycles, and street-cars! One cannot but think that nurses who appear thus have not a proper conception of their high calling.

To those of us from the larger training-schools and hospitals, who have been imbued with the idea of unpretentiousness and dignity, such display seems in extremely poor taste, to say the least, and we cannot help feeling that our profession is belittled thereby.

There are often times when a nurse cannot stop to change her whole uniform, and yet may appear with propriety on the streets and

in public conveyances; but is it ever necessary for nurses in full uniform to be seen wandering aimlessly along the public thoroughfare?

For the sake of the profession, and for the sake of true womanliness, let nurses everywhere refrain from aught that can subject them to just criticism on this score.

“To BE glad in the gladness of others; to rejoice in ministering in every possible way to any need or want; to never fail to bring the largest sympathy to the smallest trouble; to live in that spirit of thoughtful and generous consideration that we may miss no least opportunity of service; to meet the need of the moment if we can, regardless of using the resources that prudence would lay up for the future—this is the spirit which creates the conditions of power and happiness.”—VAN DYKE.

HEALTHFUL DIET.—A quart of milk, three-quarters of a pound of moderately fat beef, sirloin steak, for instance, and five ounces of wheat flour all contain about the same amount of nutritive material; but we pay different prices for them, and they have different values for nutriment. The milk comes nearest to being a perfect food. It contains all of the different kinds of nutritive materials that the body needs. Bread made from wheat flour will support life. It contains all of the necessary ingredients for nourishment, but not in the proportions best adapted for ordinary use. A man might live on beef alone, but it would be a very one-sided and imperfect diet. But meat and bread together make the essentials of a healthful diet. Such are the facts of experience. The advancing science of later years explains them. This explanation takes into account not simply quantities of meat and bread and milk and other materials which we eat, but also the nutritive ingredients or “nutrients” which they contain.—W. O. ATWATER.

